

Trump Talk Could Get Expensive in Heart of L.A.

A “careful-what-you-wish-for” scenario is shaping up in Washington, D.C., and everyone from commercial and residential property owners to retailers, restaurateurs, and other entrepreneurs in the heart of Los Angeles should take note.

Our concern started with word that U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions – who has alternated between roles as President Donald Trump’s poster boy for law and order to his whipping boy for reasons that remain inexplicable to us – recently designated the Mara Salvatrucha street gang a priority for a task force of federal law-enforcement agencies.

Mara Salvatrucha – also known as MS-13 –

was born in the Pico-Union district, just about the geographic center of Los Angeles. It’s not hard to spot reminders that its home base now takes in a swath of territory that starts just east of downtown, runs through Pico-Union and Westlake, and into Koreatown.

The gang is a horrific example of violence begetting violence, a cycle touched off in no small part by a brutal civil war in El Salvador – a conflict that counted the United States as an indirect participant decades ago.

The war wreaked havoc in the lives of many, including some who made their way to Pico-Union, where residual trauma combined with the strains of relocation, the facts of life

in a poverty-stricken neighborhood, and simple human failings to provide fertile ground for MS-13 to grow.

Crackdowns came, and so did deportations. The gang kept its core in the heart of Los Angeles but also scattered some, establishing satellites across the country and setting up shop back in El Salvador.

Now it’s considered a specialist in human trafficking, prostitution and extortion.

We typically would applaud the feds for offering extra resources to fight MS-13.

What worries us in this instance, to be frank, is the tone at the top of the Trump administration, which seems to strike chords for the sake

of making noise, and increasingly looks to be all publicity tactics and no governing strategy.

That’s not what’s needed on the streets of Pico-Union or Koreatown, hardworking areas that are vibrant in many ways but also pockmarked by the effects of MS-13, which puts a check on the full potential of any neighborhood it touches.

A genuine, well-conceived strategy by Trump’s Justice Department to fight MS-13 will be welcome.

A bunch of tough-guy tweets that stir the pot but lack any real plan or strategy will leave a lot of individuals, families, and business and property owners worse off in very real ways.

LABJ FORUM

Dedicated to Dodgers

The Dodgers didn’t win the World Series, but the team’s fandom is undeniable. So the Business Journal asks:

How many Dodger games did you go to this year?

▶ DAVID R. PASCALE JR.



Senior Vice President
George Smith Partners

I attended eight games, including two World Series home games. As an avid fan, I have been going to games since 1969. My love of the team started when I started listening to Vin Scully on the radio and keeping score in a scorebook at home.

▶ ALLAN S. GLASS



President and Chief Executive
ASG Real Estate

This year, I probably went to 10 or 15 games. I tried to go to World Series Game 7. I was going to wing it, buy a single, as tickets were dropping precipitously to the high \$600s. I took an Uber to the stadium ... and all the tickets under \$1,200 were sold out. It hasn’t sunk in whether I regret not going.

▶ DAVID EBELING

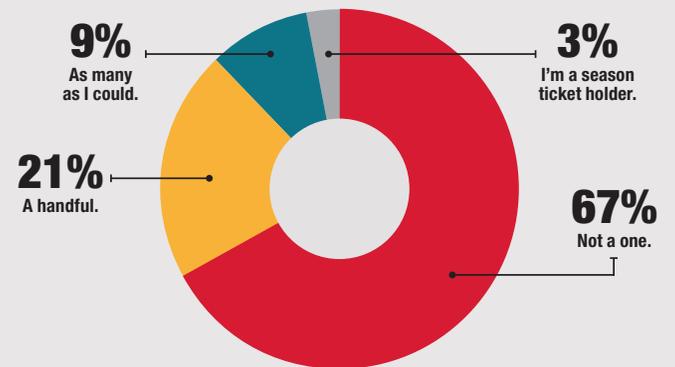


Owner
Ebeling Communications

I attended two Dodgers games this year including Game 2 of the World Series and one in San Diego. As a fan since the late 1970s, I try to take my son to at least one game per year.

LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL POLL

How many Dodger games did you go to this year?



Online results for week ended Nov. 1.

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